



# Whip Round Up

From the Office of the Assistant Democratic Leader



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## Reid for Nevada

### **Reid Works to Build New Veterans Hospital**

• Senator Harry Reid introduced a bill to authorize \$250 million for construction of a new VA hospital in Southern Nevada. The hospital would provide much-needed medical care for the fast-growing population of veterans in the region.

### **Reid, Ensign Fight for Education Funding**

• Senators Reid and John Ensign introduced legislation to change the formula for allocating funding for Head Start programs, which prepares young children to succeed in school. Their bill would secure more funding for fast-growing areas by requiring that up-to-date population data is used to distribute money.

### **Nevada Projects Approved by Appropriations Committee**

- Highway, rail, bus and airport projects in Nevada were approved to receive almost \$75 million. Road projects include the Hoover Dam Bypass (\$7 million), U.S. 95 (\$8 million) and the Southern Beltway (\$5 million). Transit projects include the Las Vegas monorail (\$25 million) and a Bus Rapid Transit route on Virginia Avenue in Reno (\$4 million).
- Senator Reid secured \$2.4 million to support justice programs across Nevada
- \$4.625 million was approved for programs to clean polluted air and water and other important community projects.



**Senator Reid joins Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (center) in welcoming His Holiness, the Dali Lama of Tibet, to the United States Capitol. They discussed human rights in Tibet.**

## Week in Review

- **Senate Stops Labor Department Overtime Pay Plan; Restores Student Loan Benefits** - The Senate passed the Labor/HHS/Education appropriations bill on Wednesday, after approving an amendment to block the Labor Department's plan to change the rules on overtime pay. The plan could have made about eight million workers ineligible for overtime. The Senate also approved an amendment to restore financial aid cutbacks by the Department of Education that would have caused up to 84,000 students to lose their Pell Grants. The President has threatened to veto the bill because of the overtime pay provision.
- **War Supplemental Appropriations Request Triggers Hearings** - The President's request for \$87 billion for military operations and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan has triggered a series of hearings before the Senate Appropriations and Foreign Relations Committees. The Appropriations hearings could occur during the week of September 22, and up to four separate hearings of the Foreign Relations Committee could begin as early as next week.
- **"White House Veterans Disability Plan To Be Challenged"** - Various Senators planned to challenge a draft White House/House Republican Leadership plan to alter the eligibility requirements for veterans disability compensation. The plan would limit the payment of VA disability compensation to those veterans who were disabled as a result of the performance of official military duties. The change could deny VA disability benefits to about 1.5 million veterans.
- **Energy and Water Appropriations Bill Under Consideration** - On Thursday the Senate began consideration of the 2004 Energy and Water Appropriations measure. The \$28 billion bill includes funding for the Department of Energy, the Army Corps of Engineers and various water and civil works projects. Following consideration of this bill, the Senate is expected to take up the Interior appropriations bill.



### **Reid's Words**

The Administration proposed changes in the rules on overtime pay that would have given millions of hard-working Americans a pay cut, and stifled the creation of new jobs. By voting 54-45 to defeat that ill-advised proposal, the Senate stood up for working families.

## **INSIDER'S CALENDAR: MONDAY, SEPT. 15**

- **1:00 p.m.** - The Senate will convene and conduct a period of morning business until 2:30 p.m., with the time equally divided between the two Leaders or their designees.
- **2:30 p.m.** - The Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2754, the Energy-Water Appropriations Act.
- **During Monday's session the Senate may also consider the motion to go to conference on the Late-Term Abortion Act, and the FCC resolution.**
- **During the remainder of the week, the Senate is expected to consider additional appropriations bills as they become available.**

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